

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, UK

SUBJECT: TORY ELECTION MANIFESTO

REF: LONDON 11573

1. SUMMARY: THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY HAS RELEASED THE FULL
TEXT OF THE "MANIFESTO" PREPARED FOR USE IN THE ANTICI-
PATED, BUT AS YET UNCALLED, OCTOBER ELECTION. PREMATURE
RELEASE WAS FORCED UPON THE PARTY BY LEAK OF THE MANI-
FESTO TO THREE LONDON DAILIES SEPTEMBER 10. MEDIA HAVE
FOCUSED ATTENTION AS MUCH UPON CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE LEAK
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AS UPON ITS CONTENTS. PARTY CHAIRMAN WHITELAW AND PARTY

LEADER HEATH, WHO WAS IN WASHINGTON AT THE TIME, HAVE DENIED THAT THE PARTY ITSELF WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LEAK.

2. THE MANIFESTO, ENTITLED "PUTTING BRITAIN FIRST," REPRESENTS AN EFFORT BY THE CONSERVATIVES TO APPEAL TO THE BROAD ELECTORATE ON NATIONAL, EVEN PATRIOTIC GROUNDS, EMPHASIZING THE GRAVITY OF BRITAIN'S CURRENT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL "CRISIS". INFLATION, IT SAYS, IS THE MAJOR PROBLEM, AND THERE IS NO EASY SOLUTION. THE MANIFESTO CALLS FOR RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE IN THE CURRENCY, CONTROL OF PUBLIC SPENDING AND THE MONEY SUPPLY, INCREASED PRODUCTION, AND RESTRAINT IN PRICES AND INCOMES. IT SOFTENS THE PARTY'S POLICY TOWARDS THE TRADE UNIONS AND RENews A PLEDGE OF CONSERVATIVE-TRADE UNION COOPERATION. WHILE CLEARLY AIMED AT PRODUCING A CONSERVATIVE-CONTROLLED PARLIAMENT, THE MANIFESTO PLEDGES THE PARTY TO CONSULT AND CONFER WITH LEADERS OF OTHER PARTIES AND OF THE "GREAT INTERESTS IN THE NATION" AFTER THE ELECTION IN ORDER TO GAIN SUPPORT AND CONSENT OF ALL. END SUMMARY.

3. THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY WAS EMBARRASSED SEPTEMBER 10 BY THE LEAK OF ITS ELECTION CAMPAIGN DOCUMENT ("MANIFESTO"), TO THREE LONDON DAILIES. PARTY LEADER HEATH, WHO WAS THEN ON A VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES DURING WHICH HE CALLED ON PRESIDENT FORD AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE, THEREUPON AGREED TO IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THE MANIFESTO EVEN THOUGH THE ANTICIPATED OCTOBER ELECTION HAS NOT BEEN FORMALLY ANNOUNCED.

4. CONSERVATIVE PARTY CHAIRMAN WHITEHEAD ANNOUNCED THAT THE LEAK DID NOT OCCUR IN THE PARTY'S CENTRAL OFFICE AND SUGGESTED A COPY HAD BEEN ILLEGALLY OBTAINED AT THE PRINTERS OR WHILE COPIES WERE IN TRANSIT. THE PRINTERS HAVE DENIED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LEAK AFTER THEIR OWN INVESTIGATION. BY TRANSATLANTIC TELEPHONE, HEATH ACCEPTED THE POSSIBILITY THE LEAK WAS A "DIRTY TRICK" PERPETUATED ON THE PARTY. HOWEVER THE LEAK OCCURRED, IT HAS ATTRACTED AS MUCH ATTENTION AS THE CONTENTS OF THE MANIFESTO THEMSELVES. FURTHERMORE, IT GIVES THE PARTY'S OPPONENTS AN ADVANCE TIPOFF TO THE MAIN POINTS IN THE TORY ELECTION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRATEGY. HEATH WILL NO DOUBT ATTEMPT TO WIN BACK SOME ELECTORAL ADVANTAGE WHEN HE MAKES A TV REPORT, EXPECTED THIS WEEK, ON HIS TRIP TO THE US.

5. THE MANIFESTO (ENTITLED "PUTTING BRITAIN FIRST") IS A SOBER AND SOMBER APPRAISAL OF BRITAIN'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES. IT PROVIDES NO EASY SOLUTIONS, BUT APPEALS TO THE WIDE ELECTORATE TO SUPPORT THE CONSER-

VATIVES TO SOLVE THE "CRISIS".

6. INFLATION IS THE MOST CRITICAL PROBLEM AND CAN BE SOLVED ONLY THROUGH NATIONAL UNITY UNDER THE CONSERVATIVES. THE MANIFESTO ADVOCATES: RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE IN THE CURRENCY, CONTROL OF PUBLIC SPENDING AND THE MONEY SUPPLY, INCREASED PRODUCTION, AND "RESTRAINT" IN PRICES AND INCOMES.

7. THE MANIFESTO HOLDS OUT SOMETHING OF AN OLIVE BRANCH TO THE TRADE UNIONS, CALLING FOR RESPONSIBILITY ON THE PART OF THE UNIONS AND RENEWING A PLEDGE OF CONSERVATIVE-TRADE UNION COOPERATION. THUS, THE PARTY'S COMBATIVE STANCE IN THE FEBRUARY ELECTIONS HAS BEEN TONED DOWN. IN ADDITION, THE PARTY PLEDGES THAT, AFTER THE ELECTION, IT WILL CONSULT AND CONFER WITH LEADERS OF OTHER PARTIES AND OF THE "GREAT INTERESTS IN THE NATION." IT ALSO PROMISES NOT TO TRY AND REVIVE THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT.

8. THE MANIFESTO ESPOUSES AND PROTECTS THE INTERESTS OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AGAINST FURTHER NATIONALIZATION, AND COVERS OTHER FAMILIAR ITEMS IN THE CONSERVATIVE PROGRAM SUCH AS: SIX-MONTH REVIEW OF PENSION LEVELS, EQUAL PAY AND EQUAL RIGHTS IN REGARD TO WOMEN, SHORT-TERM INCREASES IN SOME TAXES, IMPROVEMENT IN EDUCATION, STEPS TOWARD HOME RULE IN SCOTLAND AND WALES, STRENGTHENING POLICE, REDUCTION IN HOME MORTGAGE RATES, ETC.

9. COMMENT: DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, MICHAEL WOLFE, CONSIDERS EARLY DISCLOSURE OF THE MANIFESTO TO BE "UNFORTUNATE" BUT BY NO MEANS SERIOUS OR TRAGIC. HE REGRETS THAT, AS A RESULT OF THE LEAK, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESSMEN ARE SPECULATING WILDLY ON THE LEAK WITHOUT SERIOUSLY ANALYZING ITS CONTENT. THE MANIFESTO, WOLFE POINTED OUT, IS A NEW KIND OF PARTY CAMPAIGN DOCUMENT IN WHICH THE CRISIS IS FULLY EXPLAINED, NO PANACEAS ARE OFFERED, AND AN APPEAL IS MADE TO COOPERATION AND RATIONALITY RATHER THAN PARTISAN INTERESTS OR EMOTION. WOLFE ADDED THAT HEATH'S STATEMENT THIS WEEK WOULD BE MAINLY DIRECTED TO THE MANIFESTO RATHER THAN TO HIS TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES; AFTER ALL, HE NOTED, POLITICIANS WON OR LOST ELECTIONS ON DOMESTIC OR INTERNAL ISSUES RATHER THAN OF FOREIGN POLICY OR FOREIGN VISITS. SOHM

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